What is claimed is:

1. A system for processing records associated with a patient encounter with a healthcare organization, comprising:

    a document processor for receiving a document representing a record associated with a patient encounter with a healthcare organization and for appending identifiers to said received document, said identifiers including:

    (a) an encounter identifier identifying a particular healthcare encounter of a particular patient,

    (b) a medical record identifier identifying a patient medical record of said particular patient, and

    (c) a patient record section identifier identifying a particular section of said patient medical record; and

    an output processor for processing said document, including said appended identifiers, for output.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein

    said received document is an electronic document comprising data representing said record associated with said patient encounter with a healthcare organization and

    said document processor appends data representing said identifiers to said received document.

3. A system according to claim 1, wherein

    said received document is a paper document comprising data representing said record associated with said patient encounter with a healthcare organization and

    said document processor appends said identifiers to said received document by imprinting said identifiers onto said document.

4. A system according to claim 3, wherein

    said document processor appends said identifiers to said received document by imprinting on said document at least one of: (a) characters comprising said identifiers, (b) a bar code representing said identifiers and (c) other codes representing said identifiers.

5. A system according to claim 1, wherein

    said document processor appends said identifiers to said received document in response to user selection and entry of data representing said identifiers.

6. A system according to claim 1, wherein

    said document processor appends said identifiers to said received document in response to an event occurring in a healthcare organization including at least one of: (a) a patient admission, (b) a beginning of a medical procedure, (c) an end of a medical procedure, (d) a patient discharge, and (e) a user-defined event based on acquired information.

7. A system according to claim 1, including

    an identification processor for parsing and examining said received document to determine information for use in deriving said identifiers.

8. A system according to claim 1, including

    said document processor automatically appends said identifiers to said received document in response to identification of said received document.

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9. A system for sorting records associated with patient encounters with a healthcare organization, comprising:

a document processor for receiving documents representing records associated with patient encounters with a healthcare organization; and

a collator for sorting said received documents based on identifiers appended to said received documents to provide sorted documents, said identifiers including,

(a) an encounter identifier identifying a particular healthcare encounter of a particular patient,

(b) a medical record identifier identifying a patient medical record of said particular patient, and

(c) a patient record section identifier identifying a particular section of said patient medical record.

10. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said collator sorts and groups records based on said identifiers.

11. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said collator sorts and groups records in response to user selection of a prioritized order of said identifiers.

12. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said collator sorts and groups records in response to user selection of a combination of one or more of said identifiers.

13. A system for processing records associated with a patient encounter with a
healthcare organization, comprising:

a document processor for receiving a document representing a record
associated with a patient encounter with a healthcare organization and for
appending identifiers to said received document, said identifiers including,

(a) an encounter identifier identifying a particular healthcare
encounter of a particular patient,

(b) a medical record identifier identifying a patient medical record of
said particular patient, and

(c) a patient record section identifier identifying a particular section of
said patient medical record; and

a collator for sorting documents based on said appended identifiers to
provide sorted documents.

14. A system according to claim 13, wherein

said collator sorts and groups records in response to user selection of a
combination of one or more of said identifiers.

15. A system according to claim 13, further comprising a copy processor for:

receiving user identification information in authorizing document copying,
and

scanning and storing said identifiers in maintaining a record of users and
copied documents for use in maintaining a copying audit trail.

16. A system for securely copying records associated with a patient encounter with a healthcare organization, comprising:

    an interface processor for receiving user identification information;

    a document processor for receiving a document including identifiers comprising,

        (a) an encounter identifier identifying a particular healthcare encounter of a particular patient,

        (b) a medical record identifier identifying a patient medical record of said particular patient, and

        (c) a patient record section identifier identifying a particular section of said patient medical record; and

    a copy processor for initiating copying of said document in response to said user identification information and for scanning and storing said identifiers in maintaining a record of users and copied documents for use in maintaining a copying audit trail.

17. A system according to claim 16, wherein:

    said copy processor comprises a printing processor for initiating printing of said document in response to said user identification information and for scanning and storing said identifiers in maintaining a record of users and printed documents for use in maintaining a printing audit trail.

18. A system according to claim 16, wherein:

    said copy processor comprises a scanning processor for initiating scanning of said document in response to said user identification information and for scanning and storing said identifiers in maintaining a record of users and scanned documents for use in maintaining a scanning audit trail.

19. A machine-readable medium containing instructions for activities comprising:

receiving a document representing a record associated with a patient encounter with a healthcare organization;

appending identifiers to said received document, said identifiers including:

(a) an encounter identifier identifying a particular healthcare encounter of a particular patient,

(b) a medical record identifier identifying a patient medical record of said particular patient, and

(c) a patient record section identifier identifying a particular section of said patient medical record; and

processing said document, including said appended identifiers, for output.